

IN THE CLAIMS:

Kindly cancel claims 16, 17, 38, 39, 41, 42, 44, 45, 47, 48, 53, 54, 56, 57, 59, 60, 62, and 63, rewrite claims 37, 40, 43, 46, 49, 55, 58, and 61, and add new claims 64-72 as follows, in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.121:

1. to 36. (canceled)

37. (currently amended) An isolated bacterium belonging to the genus *Escherichia*, wherein said bacterium is modified to increase ~~an activity of a protein which imparts L-threonine resistance to said bacterium when said protein is expressed in comparison to a wild-type *Escherichia* bacterium by increasing expression of a DNA coding for said a protein by increasing the copy number of said DNA~~, and wherein said protein comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 4.

38 and 39. (cancelled)

40. (currently amended) The bacterium according to claim 37, wherein said bacterium is further modified to increase ~~an activity of a protein which imparts L-homoserine resistance to the bacterium when said protein is expressed in comparison to a wild-type *Escherichia* bacterium by increasing expression of a DNA coding for the a protein by increasing a copy number of said DNA~~, and wherein ~~the said~~ protein comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2.

41 and 42. (cancelled)

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43. (currently amended) An isolated bacterium belonging to the genus *Escherichia*, wherein said bacterium is modified to increase an activity of a protein which imparts L-threonine resistance to the bacterium in which said protein is expressed in comparison to a wild-type *Escherichia* bacterium by increasing expression of a DNA by increasing a copy number of said DNA, coding for the protein, and wherein the protein is encoded by a DNA which is selected from the group consisting of:

- ____ (a) a DNA which wherein said DNA comprises the nucleotide sequence of nucleotide numbers 187 to 804 in SEQ ID NO: 3; and
- ____ (b) a DNA which hybridizes to nucleotides 187 to 804 in SEQ ID NO: 3 under stringent conditions, wherein the stringent conditions comprise washing is performed at 60°C, and at a salt concentration corresponding to 1 x SSC and 0.1% SDS.

44 and 45. (cancelled)

46. (currently amended) The bacterium according to claim 43, wherein said bacterium is further modified to increase an activity of a protein which imparts L-homoserine resistance to the bacterium when said protein is expressed in comparison to a wild-type *Escherichia* bacterium by increasing expression of a DNA coding for the protein by increasing a copy number of said DNA, and wherein the said protein comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2.

47 and 48 (cancelled)

49. (currently amended) A method of producing an amino acid, comprising:
cultivating the bacterium as defined in claim 37 in a culture medium to produce and
cause accumulation of accumulate the said amino acid in the medium, and
recovering the amino acid from the medium.

50. (withdrawn) The method according to claim 49, wherein said amino acid is selected from the group consisting of L-homoserine, L-threonine, and branched chain amino acids.

51. (withdrawn) The method according to claim 49, wherein said amino acid is L-homoserine.

52. (withdrawn) The method according to claim 49, wherein said amino acid is L-threonine.

53 and 54. (cancelled)

55. (currently amended) A method of producing an amino acid, comprising:
cultivating the bacterium as defined in claim 40 in a culture medium to produce and
cause accumulation of accumulate the amino acid in the medium, and
recovering the amino acid from the medium.

56 and 57. (cancelled)

58. (currently amended) A method of producing an amino acid, comprising:
cultivating the bacterium as defined in claim 43 in a culture medium to produce and
cause accumulation of ~~accumulate~~ the amino acid in the medium, and
recovering the amino acid from the medium.

59 and 60. (cancelled)

61. (currently amended) A method of producing an amino acid, comprising:
cultivating the bacterium as defined in claim 46 in a culture medium to produce and
cause accumulation of ~~accumulate~~ the amino acid in the medium, and
recovering the amino acid from the medium.

62 and 63. (cancelled)

64. (new) The method according to claim 55, wherein said amino acid is selected from the group consisting of L-homoserine, L-threonine, and branched chain amino acids.

65. (new) The method according to claim 55, wherein said amino acid is L-homoserine.

66. (new) The method according to claim 55, wherein said amino acid is L-threonine.

67. (new) The method according to claim 58, wherein said amino acid is selected from the group consisting of L-homoserine, L-threonine, and branched chain amino acids.

68. (new) The method according to claim 58, wherein said amino acid is L-homoserine.

69. (new) The method according to claim 58, wherein said amino acid is L-threonine.

70. (new) The method according to claim 61, wherein said amino acid is selected from the group consisting of L-homoserine, L-threonine, and branched chain amino acids.

71. (new) The method according to claim 61, wherein said amino acid is L-homoserine.

72. (new) The method according to claim 61, wherein said amino acid is L-threonine.